

**ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW
#363**

**PAUL I. SCHUMAN
USS *ARIZONA*, SURVIVOR**

TRANSCRIBED BY:

CARA KIMURA

JANUARY 17, 2005

**USS *ARIZONA* MEMORIAL
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION**

Paul Schuman (PS): My name is Paul Schuman. I served aboard the USS *Arizona* in 1935 to 1939. I was assigned to the Sixth Division, which was the anti-aircraft division. We had four guns on the port side and four guns on the starboard side. We were also responsible for the operation of Number Two, Number Four motor launches, Number Two motor whaleboat.

Our living quarters were called casemates. That's where the five-inch broadside guns are located. The port side broadside guns were manned by the marines of the *Arizona*.

In those days, we did not have bunks. We slept in hammocks and army cots. We also had a storage area in Number Two casemate where all the cots and the hammocks were stored during the day. We also had special brackets on the overhead—to you landlubbers, is the ceiling—where we stowed our mess tables and mess benches.

Our workday started at five-thirty in the morning. We would get up and take care of all the _____ of sweeping and cleaning and all the _____ above deck where the five-inch anti-aircraft guns were located.

We had a special time where we would be able to use the head, which is the bathroom. The bathroom was located just forward of Number One Turret. Each division would have fifteen minutes to clean their teeth, washing, and shaving. There was a _____ on duty at all times to make sure that you did not overblow the fifteen minutes. When your fifteen minutes was up, the next division had the facility, and so on until we had breakfast.

After breakfast, we had many assignments for every member of the crew. We had _____ assignment who would have to be down on the quarterdeck all day, _____ officers of high rank that came aboard and the boatswain mate would pipe them aboard.

We had chipping hammers out where we would be chipping rust spots on the ship, in the morning, in the afternoon, we would be putting _____ on the places that we had chipped.

The next day we would paint all the spots with the good old Navy gray paint. There was one thing that I remember, we were taught when painting, if it doesn't move, paint it. If it moves, _____ it.

We had other duties, 'cause we had wooden decks. We would holy stone the decks, which was like a red brick, only it had a hole in it and we had like a broomstick handled which would fit in this hole. We would all get in line, the decks would be scrubbed down, there'd be sand put on it and we all would get into the rhythm of back and forth, rubbing the stone, back and forth on the deck. This way the deck got clean, white and shiny.

We also had many other drills, damage control was in case you were under attack and there was damage done and there was flooding and how to combat that. We had man overboard drills. Drills, drills, anti-aircraft drills.

And then every Saturday we had to look forward to captain's inspection. That's when the captain would look over the ship and make sure that everything was clean and shipshape, and then he would go through all the crew members and see just how clean-shaven, shoe shined, their uniform was pressed. And then there would be liberty.

The crew was made up of the port section and the starboard section. The port section was two and four, the starboard section was one and three. On certain days, the port section would have liberty and the starboard section would have the duty. That meant that the crew members of Number One and Number Three motor launches would be running the

liberty boats to shore. Well, One and Three motor launches were manned by the Fifth Division. The Fifth Division lived in the casemates on the starboard side and they were responsible for the broadside guns on the starboard side.

The First Division was responsible for the fo'c'sle, the front of the ship, and also Number One fourteen-inch gun turret. The Second Division was also responsible for their half of the fo'c'sle and they had Number Two fourteen-inch guns. The Third Division lived a-midships and they had Number Three fourteen-inch gun turret. The Fourth Division also lived midships and they were responsible for Number Four fourteen-inch guns.

The marine quarters were just inside off the quarterdeck. The Third Division was responsible for the cleaning and upkeep of the starboard side _____. The Fourth Division was responsible for the upkeep and the maintenance of the port side of the quarterdeck.

The quarter man, the signalman, the storekeepers and the remaining of the deck force crew had living quarters throughout the ship in certain areas. The engineering department were below decks. The nickname that the engineers had, they were called snipes. They'd come out of their holes, white and dirty. They'd look up at the sun with blinking eyes, wondering what time of the day it was.

It was a good ship and a happy ship. Very sports-minded. The ship got the _____ from *Reveille* in the morning, when the master-at-arms would come around and say, "Up and at 'em," so the nickname, "Atem," stood.

There are so many things to remember about the *Arizona* but we had _____ our evaporator conductors which made fresh water out of salt water, could not keep up with the demand. We used salt water for cleaning. We used salt water for taking a bath. We even had salt-water soap.

We even had a day, which we called Field Day, when everything on the ship was cleaned. The mess tables and the mess benches were taken out on deck. They were scrubbed with salt-water soap and they were washed down with the salt-water soap. The reason for this was the freshwater _____ demand _____ to keep the ship running. Also it cooked the food _____ and it was just not enough supply for the whole ship.

Once a week we would have a treat. Everybody had a five-gallon bucket. We would be given a half a bucket of fresh water to wash our teeth, wash our face, shave, _____ wash all the salt water and soap from us.

Even with all this, we were still a happy ship. Mark, you asked me about the anti-aircraft division when I talked to you a couple of weeks ago. And what I can remember about

that now is we were undermanned. We had fifty-seven men in the Sixth Division. Eight of 'em were petty officers who did not man the guns. They was supervising the crew to make sure things were being done correctly and if there was a problem, they would help straighten it out.

Each gun took seven men. There was a trainer, a pointer, a sight setter, two ammunition loaders, into the fuse control panel—one that would take it out of the fuse box into the gun itself. There was also a hot shell man who would catch the empty shell casing when it was fired.

We had two controls for the operation of the anti-aircraft guns if we were under air attack. One was right located on the smokestack, which was a rangefinder, speed control, or also was relayed to a second one on the bench, which controlled all the instruments on the anti-aircraft gun, which in turn were directed by the trainer and the pointer and the sight setter.

I happened to be on the rangefinder on the location on the smokestack. My job was to pick up the aircraft, keep a plus bead on that aircraft and the information that I had on this rangefinder would control the speed of the aircraft, the range of the aircraft and as I said would go to the control on the bridge which would forward it to the gun itself.

So as you can see, _____ in case we were at war and were using these guns, we would just have enough men to have three guns on either side of the ship, which two guns would not be able to operate.

We also used the five-inch anti-aircraft guns for surface fire. Once a year we would have what they call short-range firing practice. This meant that each gun on the port side would have a crew and a target to fire at. When we did this, this is to qualify the gun crew as to their marksmanship.

We would start firing at the target and you had ten seconds to fire four shells and hit the target. Then the crew would change, one gun pointer and the trainer, the sight setter would change positions and then they would have ten seconds to fire four shells at the target. You had to hit the target at least seven times out of eight to qualify for an E and a marksmanship pointer, which if you did qualify meant five dollars extra a month.

I happened to be one of the fortunate ones that was on the Number Three anti-aircraft gun and we had the marksmanship for two years, which meant we had an E and a hash mark. The next year, _____ gun, the Number Three gun qualified again and had an E and two hash marks. And the thing that is very exciting about this, if you could do that four years in a row, you would get a gold E on the gun itself, which would never be taken off.

All guns on the ship had this same short-range practice, the five-inch broadside guns, they would qualify for Es. The fourteen-inch guns would also qualify for the Es. And it was very exciting.

When I mentioned about not having enough personnel to man all the anti-aircraft guns, that also applied to the fourteen-inch guns. Whenever we had land range gun practice, which mean the fourteen-inch guns would be firing at targets over the horizon, which we could not see, we had three observation planes which would do the observation of defining hits _____, whatever it was and relay back to give the information to get us on the target. Crew members from the Sixth Division, the anti-aircraft division, would man some of the turrets three decks below, which was equivalent to almost three stories on a building, where we would be shell handlers, ammunition handlers. Frequently took the shells with conveyors, put 'em in a hoist that went up to the guns. The same way with the

powder bags, load 'em on the conveyors, which also went up to the guns where they were loaded and bagged. So as much gun power as the *Arizona* had, we still did not have the men to operate 100 percent. And I am sure that this applied to all the other battleships in the fleet.

In talking about the observation planes, what we called on board, we had three. They were catapulted off, one had a catapult on Number Three turret. The other catapult was on the stern. They were used strictly for observation, reconnaissance and to help us get our firing. And these planes would come back to the ship. The ship would also make a port turn. The ship turned to the port, the sea would be calm and in that area that we were turning, the seaplane would come in and land and it would get up as close as it could to the ship. And we had a crane come midship's, right in the back of the stack, which was run that would pick up the plane and put it on the catapult, atop Number Three turret. The crane in the back was used to pick up the plane

that belonged on a catapult in the stern. It was tricky.

_____ we were dropping
what they were doing and it just came _____ all
around. The boatswain mates that manned the cranes, they
picked 'em up and _____ in their
_____ knew just what they were doing.

The cranes just beyond the stack, midship's, were also used
for stacking all the boats, the motor launches, the motor
whaleboats, and even the one that we used for racing. The
crane was also used to put the garbage chute on the side of
the ship, which when we were at sea, we did dump all our
garbage into the ocean. We did not throw boxes, cardboard
or anything else like that. We had an incinerator on the boat
deck, right close to the smokestack, where all that stuff was
burned. And thank god the Sixth Division was also in charge
of that! And the reason I say thank god, at night, when it
was cold, it was so good to stand by that incinerator when
we were on lifeboat watch, near the boats and the crane.

I could go on about many things as they come to my mind, but right now, Mark, you asked me about the crew members of the *Arizona*. My cousin, H. L. Schuman, which stands for Herman Lincoln Schuman, who is still on the *Arizona*. My cousin was about five years older than myself. My father's sister married a man by the name of Schuman, that's why we both have the same name.

I remember him when I was smaller and when I went to live with him and his sister and my aunt. But he was always sort of sick, but being older, I really did not have too much to do with him. But I do remember as he got older and I got older, the doctor told my aunt that the best thing for my cousin would be to join the navy and get out in the sea air, which would be 100 percent better for his health.

So what's he do, he joins the navy. And of all the _____ he decided to pick, he picked being a storekeep, which

meant he was to end up down below decks, in a hole that had nothing but stationery, navy forms and _____ . And I just could never understand that.

_____ name was Herman Lincoln Schuman, we had a nickname for him, was called Abe or _____, which he was not. He was German. His mother was German and his father was German. I don't know his father because his mother and his father were divorced.

I don't remember where he was born but I do know that he was raised in San Francisco, just like I was. I would say in the three and a half years that I was on the *Arizona*, I saw my cousin maybe about six times, 'cause he was below and I was above. The strange part about it was that we never were that close but he still is my cousin.

When I was on the *Arizona* three and a half years,
_____. When I went into the navy, I was
seventeen and four months and they considered that as a
kid's cruise. The reason they called that a kid's cruise was
that if you were seventeen, well _____
seventeen, you would still finish your enlistment on your
birthday of your twenty-first.

_____ seaman first class came aboard ship right after
I did and we became close buddies. We got so close that
when he got married in 1938 to a girl who lived in Los
Angeles, I was the best man at his wedding. I have enclosed
some pictures that were taken with Wayne and I in Hawaii,
with the hula girls and some other odds and ends. Also I
have sent along a wedding picture that was taken. In all
these years I wasn't sure whether he had still been aboard
the *Arizona* when it had been sunk.

And when I went aboard the *Arizona* [Memorial] a couple weeks ago and did see his name there, it was sort of a shock. And I wish you would show this picture to Lisa, 'cause she was so nice and in talking to her and I am sorry that I did break down and cry.

Along with the pictures of Wayne, I'm also sending some pictures of Hawaii as I remember it and as the crew members of the *Arizona* remembered it. I have other pictures of memories of the *Arizona* which I will make a notation on the back identifying them and what they did.

I do have one small picture that I cannot write on the back but I will enclose it. The person on the left is Myers. The fellow in the middle is Shaw and myself. Myers transferred from the Sixth Division in 1937 and went to the Aviation Division. He was killed in an airplane crash in Bremerton, Washington in 1938. Shaw was a gun loader on Number Three anti-aircraft gun and also a gun pointer on the same

gun. That is when we had our short-range practice and I mentioned that we would change positions in our firing.

I have removed some things from my scrapbook which I feel will be of interest to you. On this one that says, "Boat Deck Blues," as I read it off, you'll notice that none of the crew members were ever called by their first name. They're always called by their surname or a nickname and everybody had a nickname. To begin with, Pelican WIG-GETT. He got the nickname because he was always feeding the pelicans from the ship. I don't remember what White was called for, but _____ Finnegan always complained that we're having beans and beans.

_____ Shaw, who I had mentioned earlier, was like a bloodhound. He really had good eyes.

Rasputin the Monk, he was our second class boatswain mate. They called him Loafie and I should tell you he was a

big man and strong. I remember one day when I questioned one of his decisions, he kicked me so hard that if I'd have been a football, his team would've scored three points. He also ended up being the heavyweight champion wrestler of the Pacific Fleet.

Machine Gun Butch Wilson, he loved _____, that's where he got his nickname.

"Gimme-a-break" _____ was the mess cook at that time. It was his duty to make sure everybody had enough to eat. And the funny thing about _____ that I can remember, at one time we had a disagreement on who should be side boy for the day and he ended up that we went up on the fo'c'sle and had a boxing match. Glad to say it came out a draw.

What's this _____ he always wanted, whatever we gave, he never could quite figure out what the score was, so I don't know where they get the fuse caps, but Choppers

_____ sampling, he got the name Choppers because one of our anti-aircraft firing guns, he was the hot shell man and one of the shell casings hit him in the mouth and knocked out some of his teeth. He had to have a partial plate put in. And whenever he'd get mad trying to eat, he would take 'em out and lay 'em on the table, that's where he got the nickname Choppers.

And then we come to Nazy _____ Schuman, that's me. I had a lot of other nicknames also.

Boom-Boom and Daffy Holsworth, the reason he got this name, he was a gun pointer on one of the anti-aircraft guns. Whenever we had anti-aircraft practice in firing up the target that the plane was towing, at one time he got mad and shifted from the target to the plane. And I'm sorry to say that the anti-aircraft practice for that day was discontinued because the pilot of the plane kept going and did not want to say any more of the *Arizona*.

I don't remember about Smith _____. But you know, this little article I'm reading out of my scrapbook, there is a picture of the lifeboat crew in one of the races. I believe the battleship in the background was the *Idaho*.

The next page is a first class gun pointers and signal with an E and a hash mark, which I did win when I was on gun number three. Along with that, there is a hatband that says, "USS *Arizona*." These hatbands were on, went on hats that we had just received and they called them flat hats. These flat hats lasted, I would say, about three years. I'm not quite sure why the navy did away with them, but I have my own thoughts on why. I felt that they were hazardous to our health. The reason I say that is any time we were on liberty and some sports event had taken place, which they was questionable about who had won, whenever you would run across _____ sailors and their flat hats did read, "USS *Nevada*," or "USS *Tennessee*," it always ended up in some

type of a discussion and then a fight. Most of the times our boys, including myself, would come back with black eyes, skins on our cheeks and just a one-for-all. So I believe it was better that when we did go ashore we didn't know what ship the other sailors were from.

This is the end of side one. We will continue on side two.

END OF TAPE ONE

TAPE TWO

PS: We did have a dispensary onboard ship, which we call the sick bay. Any time that you had any type of injury or did not feel well, you reported to the sick bay and the pharmacist's mate would look you over and give you a couple of APC and say, "Take these and you'll feel better."

I never did quite figure out what APC exactly meant but finally, after a number of years in the navy, I determined that A stood for aspirin, P stood for plus, and C stood for courage.

There was also another very interesting thing that I found out about our medical department. If an enlisted man contacted a venereal disease, his medical record would state and show that he had contacted a venereal disease. But if an officer contacted a venereal disease, his medical record would state that he had a social disease.

So the way I looked at it, the poor girl who transmitted the venereal disease to an enlisted man, she was nothing but a tramp. But that same girl who transmitted it to an officer, she must have been classified as high society. So it must all boil down to why the movie industry made the movie, *An Officer and a Gentleman*.

Getting back to the next page in my scrapbook, there's a little article here on the USS *Arizona* in a double triumph. Also the USS *Arizona* day's orders from November 5, 1935 in San Pedro.

On the back of this page is a shot of San Francisco Bay at night with the United States Navy anchored there.

The next page shows a picture of what we call Field Day in the navy. It shows the sailors scrubbing down the mess tables on a battleship.

The next page shows a picture of the *Arizona* leading a bunch of other battleships.

Then on the following page there is a big sketch, drawing by one of the men of the USS *Arizona*, which we _____ fleet _____ seventeen. This is when we left to go across the equator.

The next page shows a big picture of the *Arizona* which was in the *Los Angeles Times*, Sunday, December 13, 1936.

The next page shows a group of Hawaiian girls with the sign, "Aloha." Under that is battleships with *Arizona* bringing up the rear.

The next page, on both sides has pictures of the initiating crews who have already been across the equator, giving it to all the first-time sailors who were called polliwogs.

The next page is an article on boxing and some of the AAU rules for judging boxing as quoted for navy fighters.

The next page has a picture of the whole fleet anchored off an island in Hawaii, including the *Lexington* and the *Saratoga*.

The next page that I have here in front of me is when the USS *Arizona* was in Panama on their trip across the equator. There are three envelopes with the USS *Arizona* on the envelope, including some very fancy work besides two pictures of the *Arizona*. One, when she was under way and another, when she was anchored and the boons were out and the liberty boats that I had spoken and the crane lowering a boat into the water, all shown.

The next page is another blown up picture of the *Arizona* carrying through the ocean. The next two pages have to do strictly with sports and these two pages are all about the crew, the sports that took place aboard the *Arizona*.

One article on the sports page that I questioned still to this day reads, "*Nevada* wins San Francisco Bridge opening race."

I happened to be on the *Arizona* racing crew this day and to this day I still believe that the *Arizona* _____, I mean that the *Nevada* had paid somebody with a power boat to come alongside our boat as we were on an outside lane and speed up and pass us and cause such a wake that it threw all of us out of our seats and lost our oars. Even with this tragic mishap, we still finished third, but I still believe we were number one.

This last page has a big certificate that reads, "The ancient and happy order of Neptune's sweethearts domain." I pulled this out on the *Arizona* in 1936. And the girl name that I inserted, her name was B. J. McGetty. She happened to be a schoolgirl of mine in junior high school. We did get married in 1944 and have been married now for forty-three years.

We have three children, two boys and a daughter, four grandchildren. Both my boys served in the navy during the Vietnam War. My oldest boy was on destroyers and he was in electronics, which dealt with sonar, radar, and all your

little gadgets. The youngest boy, he was a troubleshooter in electronics, an air squadron attached to _____ Naval Air Station. And their squadrons would be attached to different carriers throughout his career. My daughter, the only thing that she had to do with the navy was every year, when the Army and the Navy games played, she would root for the Navy.

Also on the back of this certificate is a little article again about *Arizona* sports. This brings to our conclusion of what I have been able to put on tape. I know different times I will think of something else, but it could go on and on and on. I know I was there at Pearl Harbor, up in the _____ and standing in front of the ship, many, many more things would come to mind. And one thing I do recall when I was there a couple weeks ago, on the model that is encased in glass, I am curious why the number thirty-nine is not on Number Two turret.

Well, Mark, this does it. I hope the tape and things that I have sent, you might be able to make some use of. If there are any questions, you have my phone number or you can write, you have my address. And anything or any questions that I might be able to help you with, feel free to call or write. Sincerely yours, Paul J. Schuman, Retired United States Navy.

P.S., Mark, you have my permission to use or keep any of this material if you find it useful.

Mark, I am also sending along a couple of certificates which does not have anything really to do with the *Arizona*. One was when I was senior second class aboard the *Arizona* and took the test for senior first. And _____ I wanted to be in engineering and when I was assigned to the anti-aircraft division on the *Arizona*, you start qualifying for certain things, there was no way that I could be transferred into engineering, so I did get a few books on navy engineering

and studied them. So when my enlistment was up, I decided to take my chances on another ship and I was fortunate to go to destroyers. I changed my rate from seaman to fireman and from then on I went up and ended up as a chief. I have sent along a navy training course certificate also that I had received when I was on the USS _____, which was a destroyer and we were operating on the Caribbean, or I should say Panama. And this certificate, I wish you would take a close look at the date that I did receive this.

And I am also enclosing a menu from an American and Chinese food place in Seattle, Washington, which I happened to still have when the *Arizona* was up in Bremerton. You can look at the prices, which our navy pay of thirty-five dollars a month was able to take a girl out to dinner at least one day out of the month.

END OF INTERVIEW